

10 July 2019: PIB Summary & Analysis

Stringent Punishment for Sexual Crimes against Children

Context

Cabinet approves Amendment in the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences (POCSO) Act 2012

Amendments

- It will make punishment more stringent for committing sexual crimes against children including death penalty.
- The amendments also provide for levy of fines and imprisonment to curb child pornography.

Expected outcome

- The amendment is expected to discourage the trend of child sexual abuse by acting as a deterrent due to strong penal provisions incorporated in the Act.
- It intends to protect the interest of vulnerable children in times of distress and ensures their safety and dignity.
- The amendment is aimed to establish clarity regarding the aspects of child abuse and punishment thereof.

About the act

- The POCSO Act, 2012 was enacted to Protect the Children from Offences of Sexual Assault, Sexual harassment and pornography with due regard for safeguarding the interest and well-being of children.
- The Act defines a child as any person below eighteen years of age, and regards the best interests and welfare of the child as matter of paramount importance at every stage, to ensure the healthy physical, emotional, intellectual and social development of the child.
- The act is gender neutral.

Cabinet approves The Transgender Persons Bill 2019

Context

The Union Cabinet has approved the proposal to introduce The Transgender Persons (Protection of Rights) Bill, 2019.

Impact

- The Bill will benefit a large number of transgender persons, mitigate the stigma, discrimination and abuse against this marginalized section and bring them into the mainstream of society.
- This will lead to inclusiveness and will make the transgender persons productive members of the society.

Background

- Transgender community is among one of the most marginalized communities in the country because they don't fit into the stereotypical categories of gender of 'men' or 'women'.
- Consequently, they face problems ranging from social exclusion to discrimination, lack of education facilities, unemployment, lack of medical facilities and so on.
- The Bill shall empower the transgender community socially, educationally and economically.

Inter-State River Water disputes Bill, 2019

Context

- The Union Cabinet has approved the Inter-State River Water disputes(Amendment) Bill, 2019 for adjudication of disputes relating to waters of inter-State rivers and river valley.

Impact

- Constitution of a single tribunal with different benches along with fixation of strict timelines for adjudication will result expeditious resolution of disputes relating to inter-state rivers.
- The amendments in the Bill will speed up the adjudication of water disputes referred to it.
- Central government is of the opinion that the water dispute cannot be settled by negotiations, the Central Government constitutes a Water Disputes Tribunal for the adjudication of the water dispute.

Boost to Rural Road Connectivity

Context

In a major boost to rural road connectivity across the country, the Cabinet Committee on

Economic Affairs, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has given its approval for the launch of Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana-III (PMGSY-III).

Impact of the scheme

- This would facilitate easy and faster movement to and from Gramin Agricultural Markets (GrAMs), Higher Secondary Schools and Hospitals.
- Roads constructed under PMGSY would also be maintained properly.

Misuse of Export Promotion Schemes

Background

- Foreign Trade Policy of the Government contains certain export promotion schemes which are primarily aimed at
 1. providing customs duty exemption on import of capital goods for promotion of exports
 2. providing customs duty exemption on raw materials, components and consumables for manufacturing goods for exports
 3. providing compensation for neutralizing the disadvantages suffered on the goods and services exported.
- All these schemes have inbuilt obligations/terms and conditions which are required to be complied by the persons availing such schemes. The Government regularly monitors such obligations.

Action against defaulters

- In case of non-compliance, action is taken against the defaulters.
- Such actions may include suspension, cancellation of the authorization, black listing the defaulter from availing any export promotion scheme, imposition of fiscal penalty, cancellation/suspension of Importer and Exporter Code number and initiating criminal proceedings.
- Such penal provisions are contained in the Foreign Trade Policy/ Hand Book of Procedures, Foreign Trade (Development and Regulation) Act, 1992 and Foreign Trade (Regulation) Rules 1993.

Promotion of Agro Exports

Context

- To promote the agricultural exports, the Government has introduced a comprehensive Agriculture Export Policy

Objectives

- To diversify our export basket, destinations and boost high value- and value-added agricultural exports, including focus on perishables.
- To promote novel, indigenous, organic, ethnic, traditional and non-traditional Agri products exports.
- To provide an institutional mechanism for pursuing market access, tackling barriers and dealing with sanitary and phytosanitary issues.
- To strive to double India's share in world agri exports by integrating with global value chains.
- Enable farmers to get benefit of export opportunities in overseas market.

Guidelines for awarding Ashok Chakra

Following guidelines are laid down for awarding Ashoka Chakra:

- The Ashoka Chakra shall be awarded for most conspicuous bravery; or some act of daring or pre-eminent valour or self-sacrifice otherwise than in the face of the enemy.
- The persons eligible for the Ashoka Chakra shall be:
 - Officers and men and women of all ranks of the Army, the Navy and the Air Force, of any of the Reserve Forces, of the Territorial Army, Militia and of any other lawfully constituted forces.
 - Members of the Nursing Services of the Armed Forces.
 - Civilian citizens of either sex in all walks of life and members of Police Forces including Central Para-Military Forces and Railway Protection Force.

Banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Bill

Context

The Union Cabinet, has approved the banning of Unregulated Deposit Schemes Bill, 2019.

Expected outcome

The Bill will help tackle the menace of illicit deposit taking activities in the country, which at present are exploiting regulatory gaps and lack of strict administrative measures to dupe poor and gullible people of their hard-earned savings.

